

Coming Soon: PUBLIC MEETINGS!

Talk with WMATA and District Transportation Officials about the DC Transit Future Project! Dates and Locations to be Announced Soon.
Call 202-669-8098 or visit us online at www.dctransitfuture.com for updates



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Community Line

SPRING 2005



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF DC's TRANSIT FUTURE



Status Report on DC's New Transit Network: Selecting Corridors for Service

For the past year, *Community Line* has been telling DC residents about the process behind bringing an entirely new transit service to the District—one that will complement the existing Metrorail and Metrobus network and promote economic development in neighborhoods traditionally underserved by transit. Up to this point, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA or "Metro") have been narrowing down the many options to consider: Should buses or light rail be used? Which corridors would have the best ridership? How would the system support the city's economic and environmental initiatives?

This analytical process, called the District of Columbia Transit Alternatives Analysis (or DCAA), will result in recommendations being made that will send the project toward an environmental analysis, preliminary engineering, and—ultimately—construction. But we're not there just yet. For now, DDOT and WMATA are carefully weighing dozens of factors that will produce the most equitable and best possible system for Washingtonians.

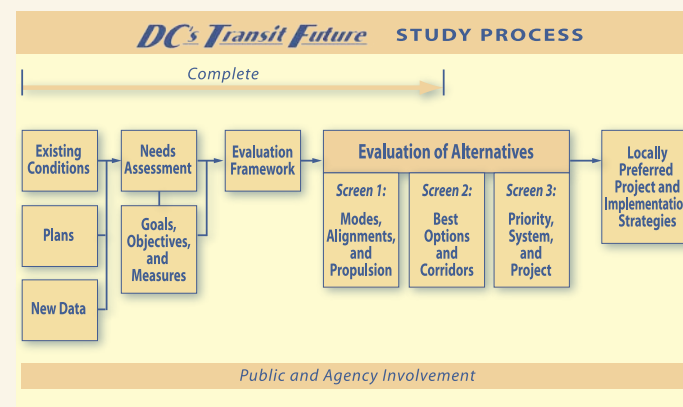
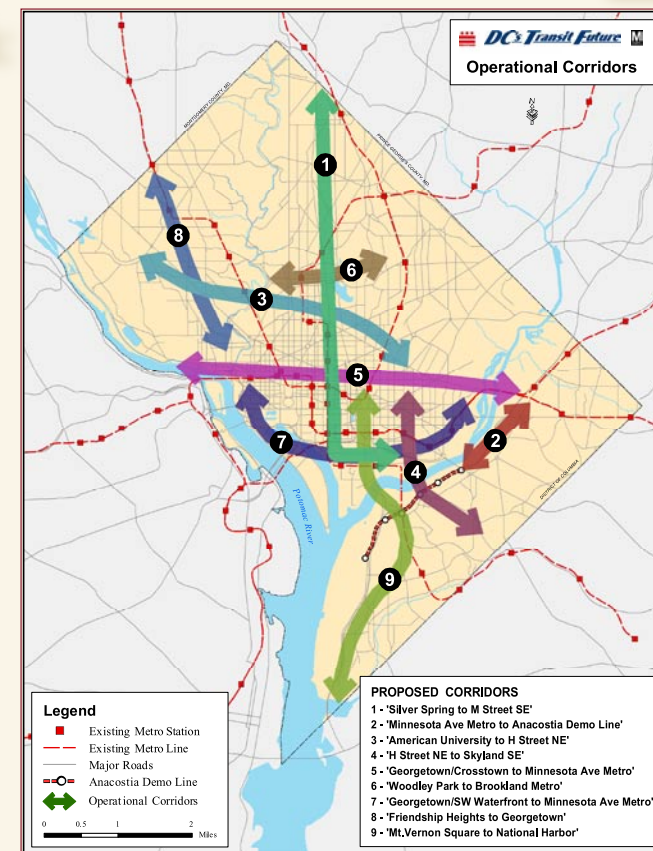
As we reported in the last issue (visit www.dctransitfuture.com), some of the evaluation criteria include the extent to which the new service will decrease travel time, make residential and employment centers more accessible, and enhance environmental quality in the District. Based on these criteria, DDOT and WMATA have reconfigured the corridors and expanded their number from seven to nine (see map this page). All nine of these corridors will receive some kind of transit upgrade in the coming years, whether it is a new mode such as streetcar (similar to light rail) or Bus Rapid Transit, or enhanced Metrobus service.

But now comes the tough part: determining the most appropriate type of transit upgrade for each corridor and a strategy to phase the improvements in over time. In the coming months, DDOT and WMATA will be seeking feedback from the public about which alternatives they think would work best in their communities. This is a crucially important part of the process, as no transit agency can move forward on a project without the input of the people who will be using the system every day.

Approximately 344,000 people live within a quarter of a mile of the proposed stops along the nine proposed alignments; that's more than one in two District residents! If you want to play a part in *DC's Transit Future*, get involved today by visiting www.dctransitfuture.com/get-involved and writing your comments in the Interactive Forum. It's quick, it's easy, and your words

will be read by officials at Metro. If you would like to see streetcars return to DC, let us know! If you would prefer upgraded bus service, let us know! If you have other thoughts or ideas you would like to share about transit in the District, be sure to get in touch. In addition, DDOT and WMATA will be holding several community meetings this spring. The dates and locations have not yet been confirmed, but an announcement will be made on www.dctransitfuture.com in the coming weeks. We hope to see you there so you can have your say in *DC's Transit Future*.

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BREAKING NEW TRANSIT GROUND: Anacostia Project Gets Underway

Work on Southeast DC's new streetcar line officially began on November 13, 2004, as the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) were joined by representatives of the DC government, CSX Corporation, and local civic leaders for the Anacostia Corridor Demonstration Project's groundbreaking ceremony.



DC, DDOT, and WMATA officials dig in with ceremonial shovels to break ground on the Anacostia Corridor Demonstration Project.

The event ushered in a new era for streetcars in Washington and marked the first time since the inception of Metro that the District has embarked on a totally new rail transit project. WMATA Second Vice Chairman of the Board Gladys Mack, who served as Mistress of Ceremonies, noted that the project was also remarkable because Anacostia was among the last parts of the District to receive Metrorail service.

"This is truly a glorious day in the history of our city and particularly the history of Anacostia," said Mack. "[The] light rail service for which we are breaking ground here today will better connect our neighborhoods on the east side of the Anacostia River."

"This is a glorious day in the history of the city and of Anacostia."

-Gladys Mack, WMATA Second Vice Chairman of the Board

The demonstration project—the initial phase of a new transit network—is a modern streetcar line that will serve six stops in the Anacostia Corridor from Pennsylvania Avenue SE to Bolling Air Force Base. The 2.7-mile line will intersect with Metro at the Anacostia station and connect parts of Southeast to Downtown DC by rail for the first time.

Mayor Anthony Williams echoed Mack's enthusiasm in his remarks, saying that he expects investment to grow in neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River, in particular for residents of Southeast so that they have greater

access to jobs and services. WMATA General Manager and CEO Richard White, DDOT Director Dan Tangherlini, and members of the DC City Council were also on hand to show support for the project.



Mayor Williams speaks on the importance of transit to economic development.



Members of the community and the media attend the groundbreaking ceremony next to the Anacostia Metrorail station.



The Anacostia Corridor Demonstration Project Quick Facts:

- Construction to begin: mid-2005
- Expected completion: autumn 2006
- Expected daily ridership: 3,000
- Frequency of service: every 15 minutes during rush hour
- Stops: Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Fairlawn, Old Anacostia, Anacostia Metro, Barry Farm, Bolling Air Force Base
- Anticipated cost: \$40-50 million
- Right-of-Way: to follow out-of-service CSX Shepard Branch Industrial Spur alignment
- Seating per car: 30, plus standing room
- Additional structures: 1 maintenance facility and 2 power substations
- More information on the Internet: www.dctransitfuture.com/demos/anacostia

COMMUNITY CLOSE-UP: U Street and Florida Avenue

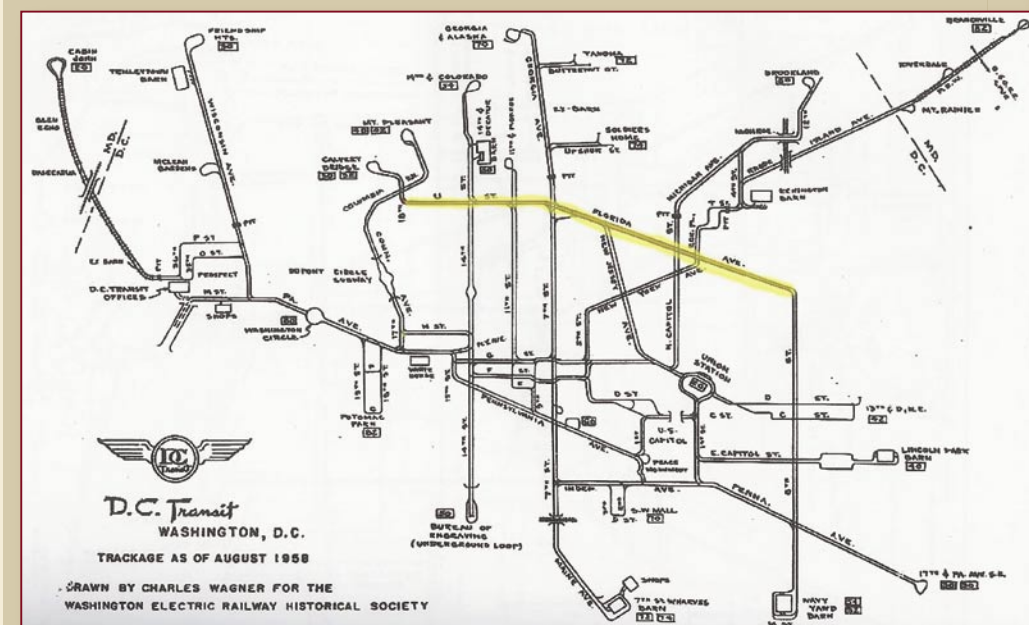
If you know where to look, you can find the remnants of an extinct transit system in the District today. Like dinosaur footprints, abandoned rails and power conduits are still embedded in the surface of P and Q Streets NW, and trolley car barns—long since adapted to other uses—still stand on East Capitol Street and 36th & M Streets NW. Washington residents and visitors often notice these holdovers from a bygone era, but few know about the kind of vehicles that used the rails or what happened to them.

Like many American cities, Washington was home to a streetcar network in the first half of the 20th century (see system map below). The green, cream, and silver trolleys were as familiar to District residents then as Metro buses are to those who live and work in D.C. today. But American cities began phasing out their aging streetcars in favor of buses, especially after World War II. Washington was no exception; the last streetcar finished its route in 1962.

Now, the streetcar is experiencing a renaissance in urban areas all over the world. In the U.S., cities such as Houston, Tampa, Memphis, San Francisco, Portland, and New Orleans have recently built new streetcar systems to provide another transportation choice to workers and tourists in city centers.

Washington will soon join the ranks of those cities with a new surface-running, mixed-traffic transit system of its own; one that will use modern streetcars or Bus Rapid Transit. Two of the streets being considered for service are U Street NW and Florida Avenue NW/NE. The old Capital Transit trolleys served this corridor (see map, below) as far west as the Calvert Street Bridge and as far east as 8th Street NE; and was intersected by lines on Columbia Road, 14th Street, 11th Street, 7th Street, New Jersey Avenue, North Capitol Street, and New York Avenue.

If a new streetcar or BRT service were instituted in the corridor, the alignment would intersect with Metrorail's Woodley Park and New York Avenue stations on the Red Line, and the U Street and Shaw-Howard University stations on the Green Line. The proposed U Street/Florida transit line would connect Adams Morgan, 16th Street, and Gallaudet University to other parts of the District by express transit service for the first time in more than forty years. It would also create a new east-west transit link and provide much-needed transit capacity for many District residents.



Capital Transit: Washington's Streetcars, the Final Era: 1933-1962; by Peter C. Kohler, (c) 2001, National Capital Trolley Museum



Above: A 1950s-era trolley sits at Calvert Loop, east of Rock Creek Gorge at the western end of the U Street line—one of the last two streetcar lines in the District.

Below: A modern streetcar rolls through downtown Portland.



Below: Old trolley tracks at P Street NW.



P Street photo courtesy of "DC Transit Track and Structures," <http://www.clouse.org/dctrans.html>

Left: 1958 map of the soon-to-be-closed Capital Transit streetcar network. Ridership on the system peaked in the 1940s; more than 8 million weekly passes were bought in 1942 at a cost of \$1.25 each. The average rider took 22.4 trips on a weekly pass.

For more information on the old Washington streetcars, visit the National Capital Trolley Museum Web site at www.dctrolley.org.

To read more about where and how modern streetcars are being used today, visit www.dctransitfuture.com/vehicles.

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